

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 44

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 27, 2003

Received and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express support for the celebration in 2004 of the 150th anniversary of the Grand Excursion of 1854.

Whereas reaching the shores of the Mississippi River represented a major milestone for the westward expansion of the system of railroad infrastructure that began on the East Coast in the 1830s;

Whereas in 1854 the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad became the first railroad to reach the Mississippi River and that achievement was celebrated with a combined railroad

and riverboat trip known as the “Grand Excursion of 1854”;

Whereas the Grand Excursion of 1854 began in Chicago with a gathering of more than 1,000 dignitaries from professions encompassing the fields of government, education, business, journalism, and the arts, and included most prominently former United States President Millard Fillmore;

Whereas the excursion party of 1854 traveled from Chicago, Illinois, to Rock Island, Illinois, by train and then proceeded by boat from Rock Island to the present-day twin cities of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and St. Paul, Minnesota;

Whereas the Grand Excursion of 1854 is credited both with bringing the upper Mississippi Valley into the national spotlight and with solidifying Chicago’s role as a major transportation hub;

Whereas communities located on the 419 mile stretch between Rock Island and Minneapolis are investing more than \$5,000,000,000 in recreational, commercial, and environmental improvements to prepare for the celebration of the Grand Excursion in 2004;

Whereas an educational program in Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota will bring the history of the Mississippi River to life for thousands of students from kindergarten through 12th grade and will focus on the recreational, environmental, and commercial importance of the river;

Whereas the Grand Excursion celebration of 2004 will establish a series of permanent exhibits throughout the upper Mississippi River, recognizing the achievements of the

many communities and celebrating the history of the Mississippi River;

Whereas the Grand Excursion, through its local, regional, national, and international marketing programs and initiatives, will communicate to the world the incredible attributes of the upper Mississippi River, and will invite hundreds of thousands of visitors to the region to celebrate;

Whereas the National Park Service, along with other Federal, State, and local agencies and many other interested groups, is preparing activities to celebrate the sesquicentennial of the Grand Excursion in 2004, to educate local residents and visitors about the attributes of the river, and to commemorate the occasion by establishing future traditions that will improve community connections to the river; and

Whereas Grand Excursion, Inc. is organizing and coordinating the celebration in 2004 of the 150th anniversary of the Grand Excursion of 1854: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That the Congress—

3 (1) expresses its support for the work of all the
4 Federal, State, and local entities, and the work of all
5 interested groups that are preparing sesquicenten-
6 nial activities to celebrate the 150th anniversary of
7 the Grand Excursion of 1854;

8 (2) expresses its support for the events to be
9 held in observance of the Grand Excursion of 1854
10 in Chicago, Rock Island, Moline, and Galena, Illi-

1 nois, in Davenport, Clinton, and Dubuque, Iowa, in
2 Prairie du Chien and La Crosse, Wisconsin, in
3 Wabasha, Winona, Red Wing, Saint Paul, and Min-
4 neapolis, Minnesota, and in many other communities
5 during the sesquicentennial observance; and

6 (3) calls on the President of the United States,
7 the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of the In-
8 terior, the Secretary of Defense, the Assistant Sec-
9 retary of the Army, the Director of the National
10 Park Service, the Director of the United States Fish
11 and Wildlife Service, other public officials, and the
12 citizens of the United States to support, promote,
13 and participate in the many sesquicentennial activi-
14 ties being planned to commemorate the Grand Ex-
15 cursion of 1854.

Passed the House of Representatives March 26,
2003.

Attest:

JEFF TRANDAHL,

Clerk.